

CHAPTER XII.¹

THE CENT JOURS.

THE extraordinary rapidity of events during the *Cent Jours*, or Hundred Days of Napoleon's reign in 1815, and the startling changes in the parts previously filled by the chief personages, make it difficult to consider it as an historical period ; it more resembles a series of sudden theatrical transformations, only broken by the great pause while the nation waited for news from the army.

The first Restoration of the Bourbons had been so unexpected, and was so rapidly carried out, that the Bonapartists, or indeed all France, had hardly realized the situation before Napoleon was again in the Tuileries ; and during the *Cent Jours* both Bonapartists and Eoyalists were alike rubbing their eyes, asking whether they were awake, and wondering which was the reality and which the dream, the Empire or the Restoration.

It is both difficult and interesting to attempt to follow the history of the chief characters of the period; and the reader must pardon some abrupt transitions from person to person, and from group to group, while the details of some subsequent movements of the Bonaparte family² must be thrown in to give a proper idea of the strange revolution in their fortunes. We may divide the characters with which we have to deal into five groups, — the Bonaparte family, the Marshals, the Statesmen of the Empire, the Bourbons, and the Allied Monarchs. One figure and one name will be missing, but if we omit all account of poor, bleeding, mutilated France, it is

¹ This chapter is inserted by the Editor of the 1885 edition.

² The account given of the Bonaparte family is founded on "Wouters* *Histoire Chronologique de la République et de l'Empire, suivie des Annales Napoléoniennes* (Bruxelles, Wouters Freres, 1847), which was written under the superintendence of Prince Pierre Napoleon Bonaparte. See also for many of the characters in this chapter the *Court and Camp of Bonaparte* (London, Murray, 1831), which is fairly correct considering its date.